

Equality impact assessment (EIA) form: evidencing paying due regard to protected characteristics

(Form updated April 2019)

Proposal to close Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School from 31 August 2023

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যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are public documents. EIAs accompanying reports going to County Councillors for decisions are published with the committee papers on our website and are available in hard copy at the relevant meeting. To help people to find completed EIAs we also publish them in the Equality and Diversity section of our website. This will help people to see for themselves how we have paid due regard in order to meet statutory requirements.

Name of Directorate and Service Area	CYPS Strategic Planning Team
Lead Officer and contact details	Andrew Dixon, County Hall
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the EIA	Sue Turley Strategic Planning Officer
How will you pay due regard? e.g. working group, individual officer	LA Officers and School Governing Bodies
When did the due regard process start?	Consultation started on 6 January 2023

Section 1. Please describe briefly what this EIA is about. (e.g. are you starting a new service, changing how you do something, stopping doing something?)

The proposal is to close Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School from 31 August 2023. A period of consultation with the local community has been carried out, including written consultation and a public meeting. A statutory representation period will follow.

Section 2. Why is this being proposed? What are the aims? What does the authority hope to achieve by it? (e.g. to save money, meet increased demand, do things in a better way.)

Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted in March 2020, when there were 20 pupils on roll. The overall effectiveness was judged to be 'Requires Improvement' as were the four key judgements on the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development and leadership and management. The arrangements for safeguarding were judged to be effective.

The number of children at Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School has been falling over the past few years. At the beginning of September 2021, there were 15 pupils on roll in the school plus two children in the nursery. This was well below the capacity of the school which could accommodate around 52 pupils. Since then, there has been a further fall in numbers, in September 2022 the school had nine statutory aged pupils and one nursery child remaining on roll. In February 2023 one pupil remains on roll at Skelton Newby Hall CE VC and this pupil is educated with peers at Sharow CE VC Primary School (Federated with Skelton Newby Hall CE VC).

The Governing Body have been active in their collective efforts to raise numbers at the school through many initiatives over recent years including the introduction of nursery provision in September 2019, which has attracted some children to the school, although numbers have been small. Marketing of the school has been a collective effort by governors, staff and parents though this has not had a long-term result.

At a recent Federation governing body meeting, governors agreed unanimously, with regret, to ask the County Council to consult on closure proposals for Skelton Newby Hall CE Primary School. This decision was not taken lightly by the governing body.

The main factors prompting the request were considerations around being able to provide such a small number of pupils with the rounded education that they deserve, together with little prospect of future improvement in pupil numbers.

Section 3. What will change? What will be different for customers and/or staff?

If this proposal went ahead, Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School would close from 31 August 2023. It is proposed that the catchment areas of Kirby Hill CE VC Primary School, as the nearest alternative school and also a CE school, should be extended to adopt the existing Skelton Newby Hall CE VC School catchment area in the event of closure.

Section 4. Involvement and consultation (What involvement and consultation has been done regarding the proposal and what are the results? What consultation will be needed and how will it be done?)

The consultation period ran from 6 January 2023 to 24 February 2023. Consultation documents were distributed to a wide range of stakeholders, and a public engagement meeting was held. The consultation document, responses, and note of the public meeting are included in the report to the Executive on 21 March 2023.

Section 5. What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

Please explain briefly why this will be the result.

Any annual savings to the Dedicated Schools Grant arising from the closure, if approved, would remain within the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant as part of the funding for all schools. Any surplus revenue or capital balances would be allocated in line with the Closing School Accounting Policy.

If the school closed, there could be a potential additional cost to the Local Authority in providing transport to other schools. Free home to school transport would be provided for entitled pupils in accordance with the revised catchment area arrangements in accordance with the County Council's Home to School transport policy.

Section 6. How will this proposal affect people with protected characteristics?	No impact	Make things better	Make things worse	Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.
Age		x	x	<p>While it is acknowledged that the proposed closure of Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School will cause uncertainty and disruption for pupils, parents and staff, other schools will work closely with parents, to meet the needs of individual children.</p> <p>Since the start of the academic year in September 2023, eight out of the nine pupils on roll at Skelton Newby Hall CE VC have now transferred to other local schools.</p> <p>Currently there is only one pupil on the school roll at Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School (year 6), who will move to secondary education in summer 2023, and this pupil is currently educated at Sharow CE VC School (Federated with Skelton Newby Hall School) alongside peers.</p>
Disability		x	x	<p>Pupils – The school is mainstream offering universal provision. Any pupils with SEND will have their individual needs considered by the School and the LA SEN team which will mitigate any potential adverse impacts.</p> <p>Staff – As an organisation NYCC will continue to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 which obligates us to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabled individuals as employees or service users.</p>
Sex	x			No impact is anticipated.
Race	x			

Gender reassignment	x			No impact is anticipated.
Sexual orientation	x			No impact is anticipated.
Religion or belief	x			No impact is anticipated. It is proposed that Kirby Hill CE VC School will serve the existing catchment area covered by Skelton Newby Hall CE VC.
Pregnancy or maternity	x			No impact is anticipated.
Marriage or civil partnership	x			No impact is anticipated.

Section 7. How will this proposal affect people who...	No impact	Make things better	Make things worse	Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.
..live in a rural area?		x	x	This proposal would have an adverse impact for those living within its catchment that could previously attend the school as they would have to travel to alternative schools. Across the area there are places available for all the pupils currently at Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School. The nearest Church of England school is Kirby Hill CE VC Primary School which is 2.4 miles from Skelton Newby Hall CE VC School by road and holds a 'Good' Ofsted judgement. The next nearest school is Boroughbridge Community Primary School at 2.8 miles and holds a 'Good' Ofsted judgement. Free home to school transport would be provided for entitled pupils within the enlarged catchment area in accordance with the County Council's Home to School Transport policy. The County Council's Home to School transport policy sets out that free school transport will be provided to the catchment school or nearest school to a child's home address if it is over the statutory walking distances set out by law.
...have a low income?			x	There may be adverse impact on those families with low incomes by the proposed closure of the school. However, this would be mitigated by the LA provided transport assistance, in line with the Transport Policy.
...are carers (unpaid family or friend)?	x			No impact is anticipated.

Section 8. Geographic impact – Please detail where the impact will be (please tick all that apply)

North Yorkshire wide	
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Craven district	
Hambleton district	
Harrogate district	x
Richmondshire district	
Ryedale district	
Scarborough district	
Selby district	
If you have ticked one or more districts, will specific town(s)/village(s) be particularly impacted? If so, please specify below.	
Skelton on Ure Village	

Section 9. Will the proposal affect anyone more because of a combination of protected characteristics? (e.g. older women or young gay men) State what you think the effect may be and why, providing evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.

All pupils and staff at the school would experience changes under these proposals that staff and governors would need to manage sensitively.

The County Council's Officers now feel that this decision is in the best interests of children and families served by the school.

Section 10. Next steps to address the anticipated impact. Select one of the following options and explain why this has been chosen. (Remember: we have an anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can access services and work for us)	Tick option chosen
1. No adverse impact - no major change needed to the proposal. There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified.	
2. Adverse impact - adjust the proposal - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We will change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, or we will achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people.	
3. Adverse impact - continue the proposal - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We cannot change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, nor can we achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people. (There must be compelling reasons for continuing with proposals which will have the most adverse impacts. Get advice from Legal Services)	x
4. Actual or potential unlawful discrimination - stop and remove the proposal – The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination. It must be stopped.	
Explanation of why option has been chosen. (Include any advice given by Legal Services.)	

Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School is designated as a rural school under the Designation of Rural Primary Schools (England) Order. The School Organisation regulations and guidance contain a presumption against closure of rural schools, and it is a requirement that proposers must consider the effect of the discontinuance of any rural primary school on the local community. The statutory guidance specifically states that 'This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but the case for closure should be strong and a proposal must be clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area.' Careful consideration to alternatives to closure of the school, including transport implications and the impact on local people and the wider community has been given.

A detailed analysis of these issues is contained in the Statutory Proposals and the report to Executive of 21 March 2023.

Careful consideration has been had to alternatives to closure, but it is concluded that the case for closure is strong and in the best interests of educational provision in the area.

Section 11. If the proposal is to be implemented how will you find out how it is really affecting people? (How will you monitor and review the changes?)

Monitoring of standards will be carried out through the County Council's Education & Skills Team and through Ofsted inspections. Monitoring of sufficiency of school places in the area will be undertaken by the CYPS Strategic Planning Team.

Section 12. Action plan. List any actions you need to take which have been identified in this EIA, including post implementation review to find out how the outcomes have been achieved in practice and what impacts there have actually been on people with protected characteristics.

Action	Lead	By when	Progress	Monitoring arrangements
Not applicable				

Section 13. Summary Summarise the findings of your EIA, including impacts, recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

The purpose of the consultation and proposed decision is to ensure that the children are provided with the best education provision in the area in a sustainable, stable and effective manner. In order to achieve these aims the proposal to close Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School needs to be considered. Whilst it is recognised that there may be adverse impact upon those with protected characteristic of age, there are more positive impacts that will result if these proposals are implemented. As these proposals develop, any adverse impacts will be carefully monitored and all reasonable mitigations will be taken.

Section 14. Sign off section

This full EIA was completed by:

Name: S Turley
 Job title: Strategic Planning Officer
 Directorate: CYPS
 Completion date: 27/2/23

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): A Newbold
Date: 9/3/23